

# **NEW MEXICO OFFICE OF NATURAL RESOURCES TRUSTEE**

## **RECENT SETTLEMENT AND RESTORATION PROJECTS**



*Before and after photos of the residential street and adjacent sewer line crossing at Cameron Creek in Santa Clara, NM.*

### **\$4 Million Natural Resource Damage Settlement**

A \$4M settlement was reached with Chevron Molycorp to restore natural resources that were injured as a result of releases of hazardous substances from the Chevron Molycorp mine facility located in Questa. The restoration funds will be used to plan and implement projects that compensate for injury to groundwater and aquatic habitat resources. In addition, 225 acres of land called the Anderson Ranch is to be transferred to the Bureau of Land Management for conservation and natural resource protection. A public meeting will be held to solicit restoration project ideas.

### **Restoration projects recently completed and ongoing**

Restoration projects are implemented with damage settlement funds and, when available, augmented with grants from other agencies or organizations.

### **Ancheta Springs Ranch Conservation Easement**

This \$60K project protects in perpetuity valuable wildlife habitat on the Ancheta Springs Ranch by enabling the owners to put a conservation easement on the Ranch. Wildlife and wildlife habitat benefit through the avoidance of future risk of subdivision and development on the property, which could harm the Ranch's diverse habitats.

### **ASARCO Blackhawk Mine Tailings Stabilization**

This \$1M project is stabilizing exposed toxic mine tailings at the tailings impoundment.



*Tailings (yellow material) exposed by erosion.*



### **Bayard Wastewater Reuse Project**

This \$4M project built the infrastructure for a wastewater treatment facility to enable groundwater conservation by using treated wastewater for irrigation.



*Completed construction of the wastewater building and the 20,000-gallon above ground storage tank.  
Photo on the right shows equipment installed in the new building.*

### **Burro Cienaga and Mimbres River Watershed Projects**

Wildlife and habitat restoration projects totaling \$992K are being implemented in the Burro Cienaga and Mimbres River watersheds. Projects include reconstruction of stock tanks and ponds to develop and increase wetland and riparian habitats for wildlife; repairs of severe erosion damage to improve watershed function; and restoration of critical riparian habitat.



*Examples of rock and wooden structures to be used to trap sediments and minimize erosion while increasing recharge to the water table. - Burro Cienaga at Pitchfork Ranch.*

### **Curry County Playa Lakes Conservation**

This \$365K project is preserving 1,000 acres of beneficial playa habitat through 10-year conservation agreements with private landowners.



*Playa conservation sign posted at each of the 10 playas under the conservation agreement.*

### **Double E Ranch Habitat Protection**

The 5,900 acre Double E Ranch in Grant County will protect and restore native riparian habitat along the approximately 3 miles of Bear Creek that runs through the Ranch. Funding for the State acquisition of the \$3M project came from both ONRT settlement funds and the NM State Game Commission who is the final owner of the property.



*Bear Creek meandering along canyons walls at the Double E Ranch.*

### **Mountain View Nitrate Plume**

This \$4.5M project in Albuquerque's South Valley will reduce concentrations of nitrate-contaminated groundwater close to WQCC standards to allow for natural attenuation of groundwater.



*The nitrate plume treatment system compound where a soybean product amendment is injected into groundwater to breakdown nitrate in the contaminated plume.*

### **River Ranch Habitat Protection**

The 1,010 acre River Ranch project protects and restores native riparian habitat along the Mimbres River through the purchase and conservation of the Ranch property. Funding for the \$685K project came from both ONRT settlement funds and NM State Game Commission who is the final owner of the property.



*The Mimbres River riparian area at River Ranch.*



### **Santa Clara Sewer Line Improvement**

This \$412K project replaced and fortified the main sewer lines to prevent re-occurrence of sewage spills into Cameron Creek and the alluvial groundwater.



*Before and after photos of the residential street and adjacent sewer line crossing Cameron Creek.*

### **San Vicente Creek Mill**

Completed this \$1.2M project which removed abandoned tailings contaminating the San Vicente Creek and the groundwater beneath the Creek. Quarterly monitoring of excavated and re-vegetated areas is on-going.



*Removal of tailings.*

### **Silver City Blackhawk Sewer Extension Project**

Completed this \$706K project which extended a sewer line to 35 residences to eliminate the use of faulty septic systems that contaminate groundwater.



*Trenching for sewer line and manhole installation.*

### **Silver City Ridge Road East Sewer Extension Project**

This project will extend municipal sewer lines to 162 residences and eliminate the use of potentially faulty septic systems that contaminate groundwater. The anticipated cost of this project is \$4M.



*One of the residential streets that will receive a new municipal sewer line.*